2019 Asia insights: Building a great place to work for all: The untapped power of gender diversity in Asia

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Building A Great Place to Work For All:
The Untapped Power of Gender Diversity in Asia

Great Place To Work®

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Building A Great Place to Work For All

The Untapped Power of Gender Diversity in Asia

By Richard R. Smith, Evelyn Kwek & Tyler Thorpe

INTRODUCTION

The Asia-Pacific region is characterised by contrasts, reflecting a rich diversity in socioeconomic statuses, cultures, rates of business growth, economic drivers, regulatory environments and political dynamics. For businesses that operate across the region, this diversity can result in great complexity. Rather than viewing it as a challenge, how can we leverage the diversity of our region as an opportunity?

Greater organisational diversity has been shown to lead to higher financial performance, improved innovation and openness to adaptation. These differentiators are becoming increasingly critical in the face of potential business disruptions resulting from global digital shifts such as artificial intelligence (AI), blockchain, machine learning, robotics and other advances. In confronting these disruptions, an increasing number of organisations are recognising the importance of diversity in building high-performance teams and establishing organisational cultures that can embrace the challenges ahead.

However, capitalising on diversity can be a challenge, as diversity is not enough by itself. Diverse employees must also feel a sense of belonging in an inclusive work environment. A recent BCG study (Krentz, 2018) across 14 countries highlighted a tendency of most organisations to underestimate obstacles faced daily by their diverse employees. Many leaders fail to recognise the organisational bias experienced by their employees. Implementing policies against overt discrimination is important – but building a culture of inclusion is a different matter altogether.

For over 30 years, Great Place to Work® (GPTW) has been measuring culture and the factors that contribute to creating a high-trust, high-performance work culture. This year, we turn our focus to diversity to better understand what organisations are doing to create the right environment for embracing diversity in the Asia region, with particular focus on gender diversity. To do this, we examined GPTW data from 900 organisations across 8 Asian countries covering a total active workforce of more than 1.5 million people. Since this involves more than 400,000 surveys and 2.4 million data points, we conducted our analysis using university research models.
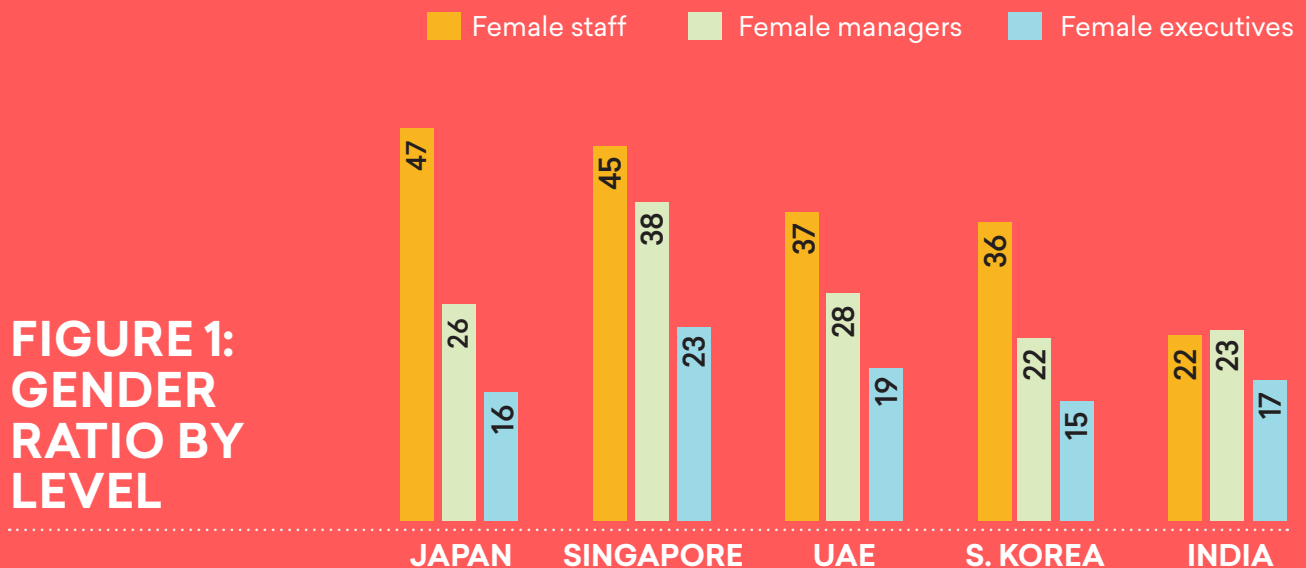
GENDER DIVERSITY – CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The last decade has seen a wide range of research studies that demonstrate the positive contribution of increased gender diversity in the workplace. In a summary of recent research, Catalyst (2018) reported that in well-managed diverse and inclusive workplaces, the presence of women in the workforce, leadership and board positions makes for better business results, including a positive connection on KPIs like better financial performance, better stock growth and improved innovation. Sodexo conducted a five-year study to examine the performance implications of a gender-inclusive work culture and found that teams managed by a balance of men and women were more successful across a wide range of outcomes, including employee engagement and retention, client retention and safety (Sodexo Gender Balance Study, 2018). *Author's note: While we have only focused on gender diversity in this paper, research by Great Place to Work® (2018) in the USA also found significant correlations between the workplace experiences reported by female employees and those of other minority groups – an indication that increased gender diversity can increase openness to people with diverse backgrounds overall.*

The World Economic Forum (WEF, 2018) publishes an annual global gender gap report that highlights factors enabling women's participation in work and the economy as well as differences by country. WEF notes that national cultures and local policies have a significant impact on the participation of women in the workforce. In addition to country cultures, industry sectors also have cultures and work practices that impact gender diversity. It is no secret that increasing gender diversity in the workplace has been a challenge in Asia. Societal norms, generational assumptions and even legal limitations have cast a different trajectory for women seeking acceptance in business roles and leadership positions. While this is changing in many Asian countries, the number of women in top political and business roles is still much lower than the averages in other global regions. The McKinsey Global Institute (2018) reports that, in the Asia Pacific region, there is only one woman in leadership positions for every four men (25%), as compared with a global average of just under four women for every ten men (37%).

Yet, women across the globe are playing an increasingly important role in the economy as both consumers and employees. According to the Future of Jobs Report by the World Economic Forum (2016), over the next decade, women will account for US$5 trillion in additional consumer spending and more than two-thirds of the global disposable income. Women currently make up the majority of those enrolled in universities in most countries and outnumber men for entry-level professional work in many. However, women currently account for an average of 33% of all junior level staff, 24% of mid level staff, 15% of senior level staff and 9% of CEOs on a global basis (WEF, 2018). From our data set across Asia, we see the same general trend across the countries in our survey as shown for selected countries in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1: GENDER RATIO BY LEVEL

Female staff　　Female managers　　Female executives

	JAPAN	SINGAPORE	UAE	S. KOREA	INDIA
Female staff	47	45	37	36	22
Female managers	26	38	28	22	23
Female executives	16	23	19	15	17

*Data of breakdown by job levels is not available for all countries

If we consider the economic potential associated with this missing segment of human capital, Asia could add US$4.5 trillion to the annual GDP by 2025 (McKinsey, 2018). Given an increasing number of female university graduates, ageing populations, challenges in skills development and the need for new sources of labour, embracing gender diversity provides a clear opportunity.

## ENABLING DIVERSITY – TEAMWORK AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

While increasing gender diversity presents an area of opportunity, how do we create the kind of workplace environment that truly leverages it? A recent BCG study in Southeast Asia notes that "Gender diversity is most positively affected by interventions that actually change the way people work and interact… building an environment where women feel safe and supported." In other words, broad policy and high-level organisational statements do very little to change the day-to-day work environment.

Through our ongoing research efforts with Singapore Management University (SMU), we have found that organisations identified as Best Workplaces™ create a higher level of psychological safety for employees. Harvard professor Amy Edmonson describes psychological safety as a sense of confidence that team members will not embarrass, reject or punish someone for speaking up. Again, this year, we have found that psychological safety is markedly higher in Best Workplaces™ across Asia. Since teamwork is highly linked with psychological safety, we also continue to see strong evidence that Best Workplaces™ are creating a competitive advantage by building environments that support teamwork.

Best   Rest

FIGURE 2: PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY AND TEAMWORK IN BEST VS. REST ORGANISATIONS[1,2]

PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

4.2

3.8

TEAMWORK

4.3

3.9
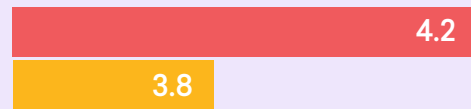
Over the last two years, our Asia-based research revealed three key drivers of psychological safety in organisations: Behavioural Integrity of Leaders, Supportive Organisation Practices and Strength of Relationship Networks.

Behavioural integrity is measured by how employees see management delivering on promises, how management actions match their statements, and if management is honest in business dealings. In other words, behavioural integrity has a lot to do with trust in management. When employees do not have confidence in the promises or expectations of management, trust can erode, and doubts may surface about potential actions. Often, this can lead to risk aversion, which can limit creativity and the positive actions of a team.

Organisational support describes how employees feel about the mechanisms provided by the employer that go beyond what is needed for the job. Examples include flexible work arrangements and training opportunities for personal development. Such practices can result in employees feeling valued and cared for by the organisation.
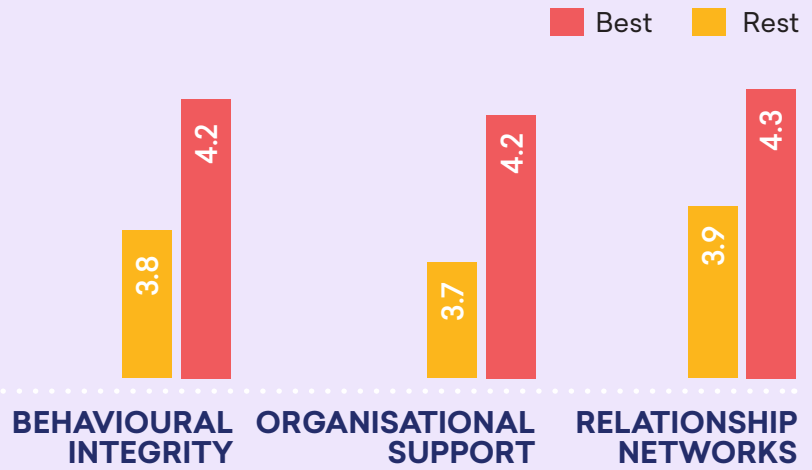
Relationship networks refer to the degree of connectedness that an employee feels with others in the workplace. This can be fostered by management openness as well as employee camaraderie. Building a culture of mutual respect regardless of role and hierarchy can foster a healthy environment of trust.

1 The construct of the Great Place to Work® Trust Index® survey is based on a total of 58 affirmative statements. Respondents are asked to rate each statement using a 5-point scale, starting with 1 (almost always untrue), 2 (often untrue), 3 (sometimes true/ sometimes untrue), 4 (often true) and 5 (almost always true). The data points in Figures 2 & 3 refer to the average of all valid ratings.

2 For companies surveyed within the Great Place to Work® database, 'Best' here refer to organisations within the Asia region that have been ranked among the 2018 Asia's Best Workplaces™ lists, while 'Rest' refer to all other organisations in the region that participated in the Trust Index® survey.

FIGURE 3: BEST VS. REST ON DRIVERS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

Best   Rest

	Rest	Best
BEHAVIOURAL INTEGRITY	3.8	4.2
ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT	3.7	4.2
RELATIONSHIP NETWORKS	3.9	4.3

Our analysis clearly revealed that each of these three drivers contribute strongly to overall psychological safety, which in turn supports overall teamwork. This was true for all workplaces, not just the Best Workplaces™.

FIGURE 4: SUMMARY OF FACTORS AFFECTING TEAMWORK

BEHAVIOURAL INTEGRITY

ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT

RELATIONSHIP NETWORK
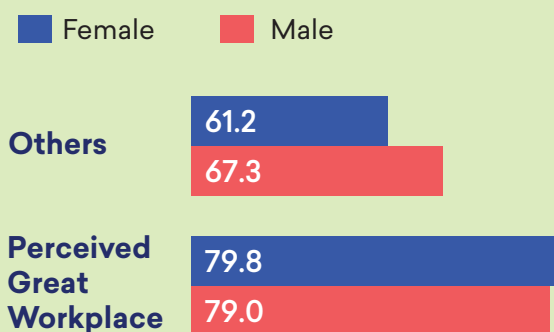
PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY → TEAMWORK

THE GENDER GAP IN ASIA

Psychological safety and the associated factors of behavioural integrity, organisation support and relationship networks have been shown to foster teamwork, but do men and women experience these factors in a similar way? To review this more closely, we separated the 400,000 survey responses by gender (over 300,000 male and over 100,000 female). Across many organisational factors, we found a relatively consistent difference in gender perception across countries in Asia.
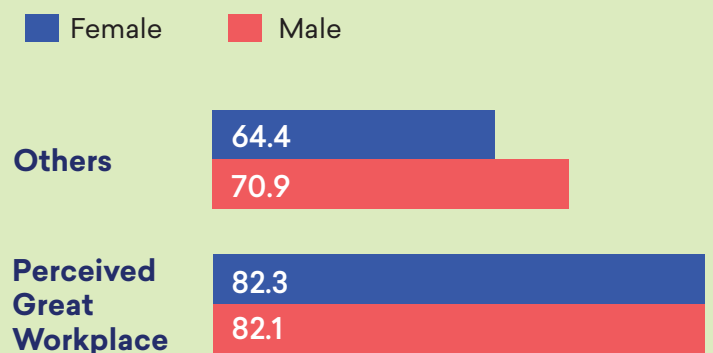
To understand these differences, we identified organisations that female respondents rated most favourably as a great workplace (based on the frequency of positive responses to the Trust Index® barometer statement: "Taking everything into account, I would say that this is a great workplace."). By examining the key factors related to diversity by gender and by company, we uncovered some clear patterns. Perhaps it comes as no surprise that men rated higher in psychological safety than women in most companies. Companies perceived to be great workplaces by women scored well for both men and women, as shown in Figure 5.

The same was also generally true regarding perceptions of teamwork between male and female employees in the work environment.

## FIGURE 6: PERCEPTION OF TEAMWORK BY GENDER IN ASIA

Female Male

Others
64.4
70.9

Perceived
Great
Workplace
82.3
82.1

FIGURE 5: PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY BY GENDER IN ASIA

Female Male

Others
61.2
67.3

Perceived
Great
Workplace
79.8
79.0

We found that these workplaces have also been able to narrow down or even close their gender gap. Looking across these organisations, we observed several key distinctions. Firstly, they were more likely to have a higher percentage of female employees in their workforce. Secondly, more than half of these organisations had a senior leader whose primary role focused on promoting diversity.

However, we note that even these companies rated as a 'great workplace' by women are still working towards a greater gender balance in the workforce, as shown in Figure 7.

FIGURE 7:
PERCENTAGE OF FEMALE EMPLOYEES AT ORGANISATIONS RATED AS 'GREAT WORKPLACES' BY WOMEN

KSA	INDIA	SRI LANKA	S. KOREA	UAE	JAPAN	SINGAPORE	GREATER CHINA
14	22	24	29	30	37	43	49
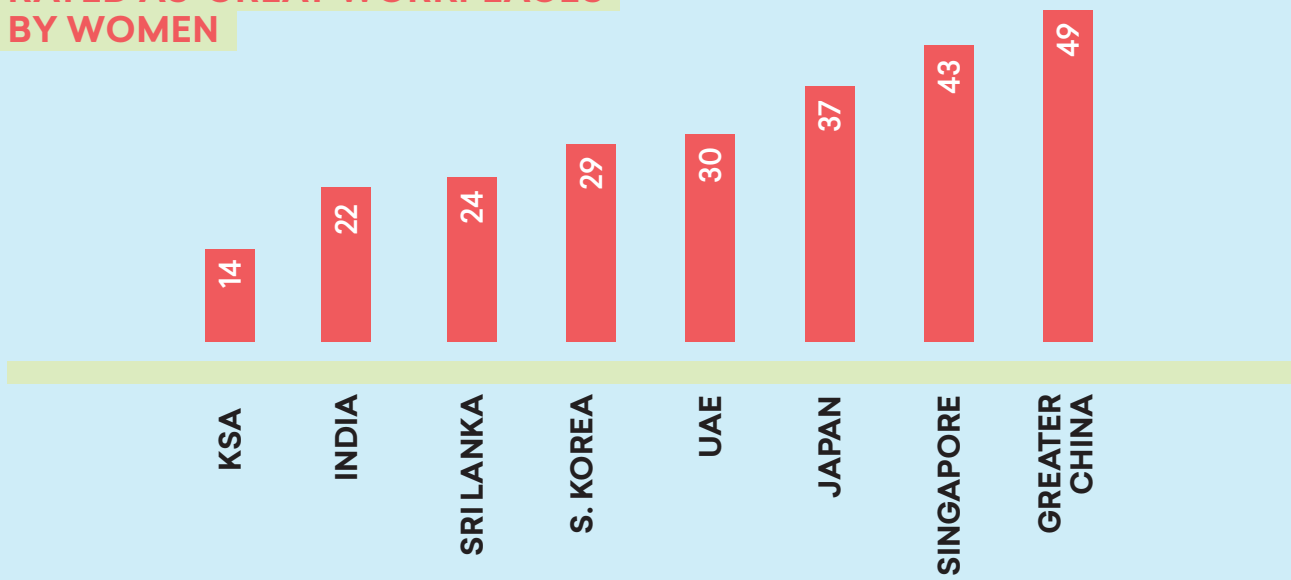
INCLUSION AND BELONGING

We often hear 'Diversity and Inclusion', or D&I, used to describe a firm's efforts to not only improve diversity, but also create a work environment that is open to everyone. Broadly, we use **'diversity'** to refer to demographic differences between individuals, including age, gender, ethnicity, religion, education and income levels. In some organisations, the concept of diversity has expanded to include non-demographic differences such as ways of thinking, creativity, personality types and social/work styles.

'Inclusiveness' is defined as the degree to which a work environment or culture is open to individuals of all backgrounds—not just members of historically powerful identity groups—so that everyone is fairly treated, valued for who they are and included in core decision making (Roberson, 2006). In other words, inclusiveness refers to how open the company is to receive diverse employees. After all, we may be able to hire a diverse set of employees, but do we have a culture that embraces them?

More recently, organisations have introduced the concept of **'belonging'**,

whose origins are found in social psychology research. If inclusion is what the company does to embrace and welcome diverse individuals, we can think about belonging as the individual's feeling towards their organisation (Shore, et. al., 2011). In other words, do they feel like an equal part of the team? The experience of belonging refers to the individual's perception of connectedness and whether they feel that others care about their well-being as an equal part of the group.

Professor Paul Green at the Harvard Business School recently highlighted how the tenor of day-to-day interactions with colleagues in an organisation can shape the individual's sense of belonging (Green, et. al., 2017). As members of an organisation, we seek to be accepted and seek to belong. Catalyst suggests that personal attributes such as gender, race, ethnicity and nationality are all lenses through which we might view others, as well as how others may view us. The more we are made to feel different from others, the harder it is for us to feel a sense of belonging. In this sense, inclusion and belonging can be seen as two sides of the same coin.

As we explored this topic, we considered the extent to which organisations create an inclusive work environment and the extent to which people feel a sense of belonging. In our examination of gender diversity in Asia, we utilised an Inclusion Index that includes a subset of statements taken from the 58-question Trust Index® survey that differentiate best workplaces for women. We also created a second Belonging Index comprising other survey statements based on research in behavioural psychology (Jenna, 2018).
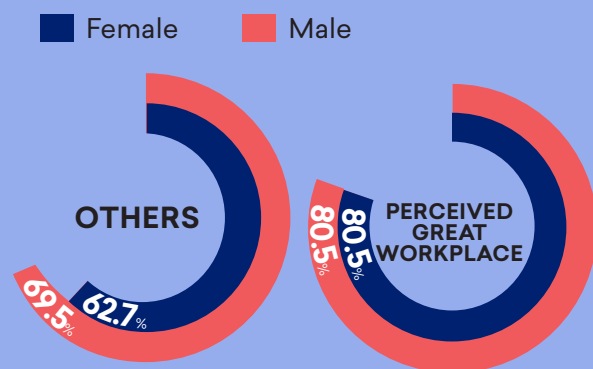
In our sample of 900 companies, we found a significant difference in the perception of inclusion between perceived great workplaces by women and the others.
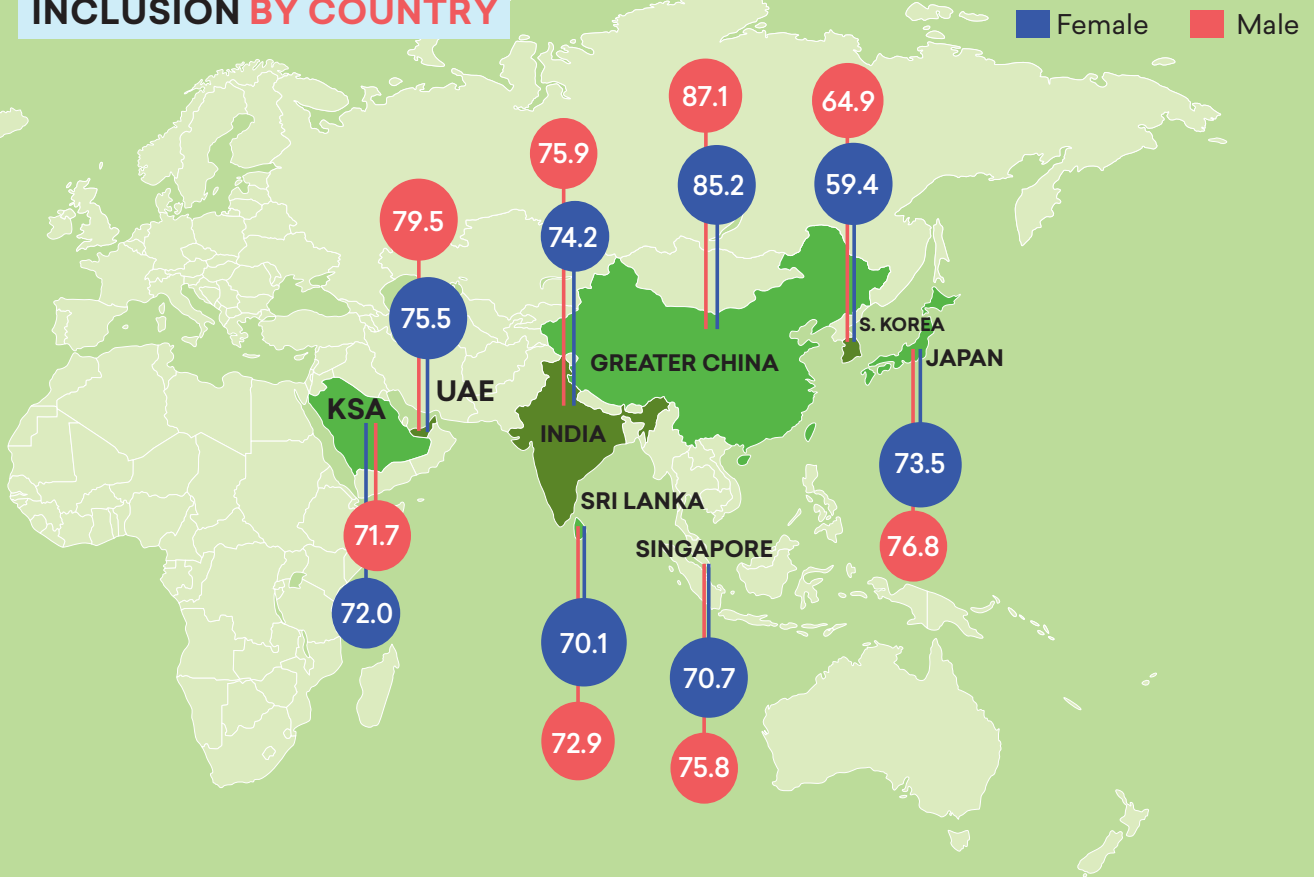
FIGURE 8:
INCLUSION INDEX FOR ASIA

■ Female   ■ Male
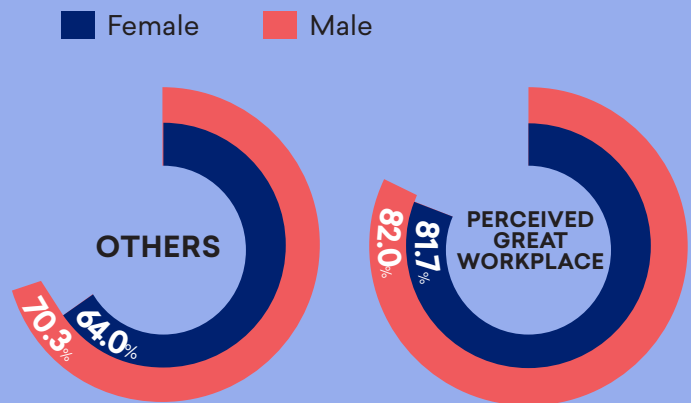
When it comes to belonging, we note a similar pattern.

FIGURE 9:
BELONGING INDEX FOR ASIA

■ Female   ■ Male

Looking at these by countries, we observe the following patterns.

FIGURE 10:
INCLUSION BY COUNTRY

Female   Male

	Female	Male
UAE	75.5	79.5
KSA	72.0	71.7
INDIA	74.2	75.9
GREATER CHINA	85.2	87.1
S. KOREA	59.4	64.9
JAPAN	73.5	76.8
SRI LANKA	70.1	72.9
SINGAPORE	70.7	75.8

FIGURE 11:
BELONGING BY COUNTRY

	Female	Male
UAE	75.8	78.8
KSA	71.3	74.9
INDIA	75.3	78.3
GREATER CHINA	83.4	85.2
S. KOREA	58.2	64.0
JAPAN	71.4	75.6
SRI LANKA	69.4	72.7
SINGAPORE	70.7	71.8
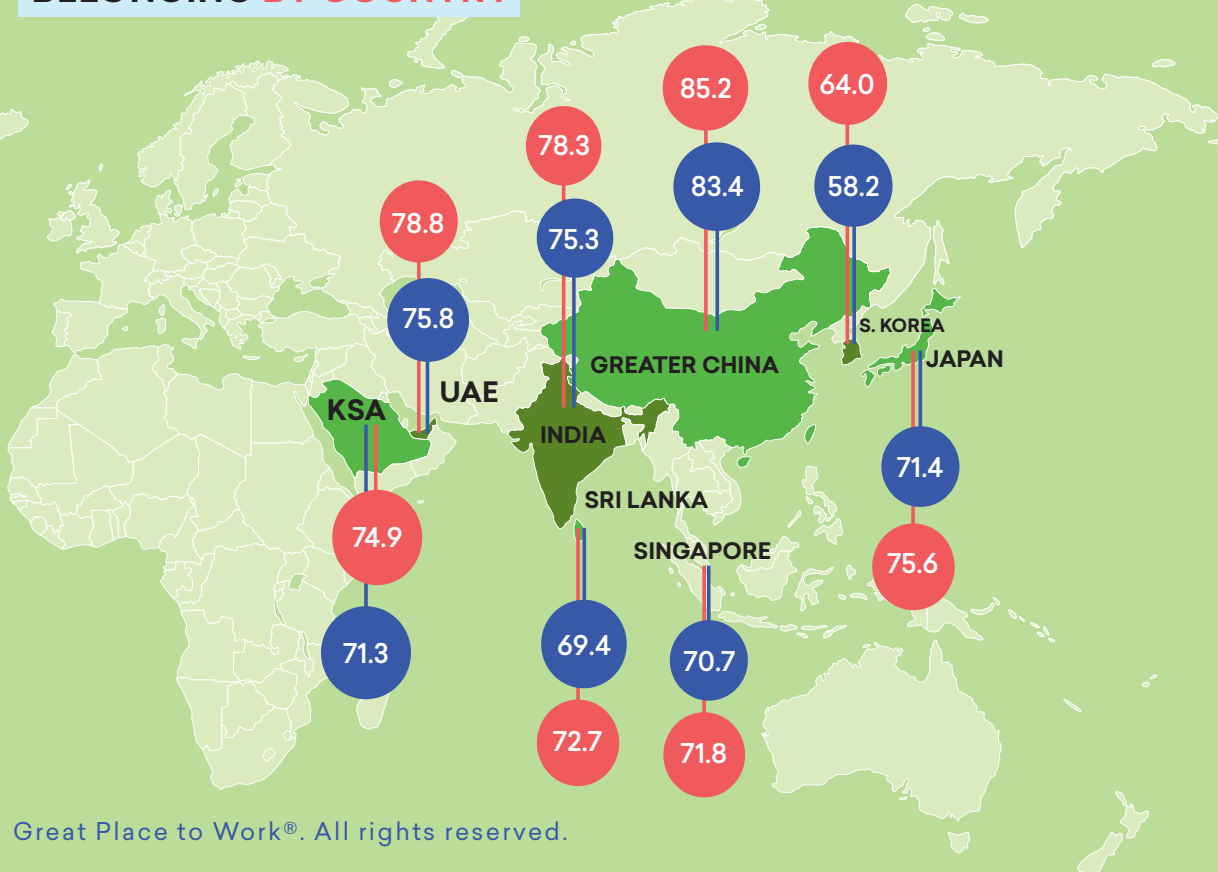
Looking more closely at gender gap differences across Asia, we found that women rated their experience lower than men in both pay and fairness. In most companies, however, fewer men perceive there to be a gender gap or that women are treated differently, compared to perceptions amongst women. Figure 12 shows the survey items with the largest gender gap (ranked from largest to smallest gap):

FIGURE 12: LARGEST GENDER GAP ITEMS

1/ People here are paid fairly for the work they do.
2/ I feel I make a difference here.
3/ Everyone has an opportunity to get special recognition.
4/ Managers avoid playing favourites.
5/ Promotions go to those who best deserve them.
6/ I want to work here for a long time.
7/ People avoid politicking and backstabbing as ways to get things done.
8/ Management does a good job of assigning and coordinating people.
9/ My work has special meaning: this is not "just a job".
10/ Management shows appreciation for good work and extra effort.

Closing gender gaps is hard work. These gaps exist even within the Best Workplaces™ in Asia. However, organisations that have been able to address gender differences and create more parity have seen great benefits. For example, when female employees feel a sense of belonging, they are nearly twice as likely to feel a sense of psychological safety and agree that their company is a great place to work. By improving psychological safety, organisations facilitate stronger teamwork and are more likely to have an environment that fosters innovation. By making the work environment great for women, organisations are three times as likely to be a best workplace, which is highly correlated with financial performance.

Our analysis also revealed that organisations with a higher level of gender diversity (i.e. those with more female employees as a percentage of total employees) are more likely to have already narrowed the male-female gap in the above items and realised more balanced results on measures of inclusion and belonging. While smaller organisations seem to do quite well with many of these items, we also note that several global firms have made good progress in bringing improved gender diversity, inclusion and belonging into their Asian workplaces. Competing globally can be a challenge for modern businesses of all sizes, so addressing gender diversity can be critical to building the kind of organisational culture that can deliver sustained competitive advantage.

ADDRESSING THE DIVERSITY CHALLENGE

On the surface, addressing the topic of diversity can seem quite straightforward. However, it is a common misconception that if we treat everyone the same or are blind to demographic and personal differences, we can create an open work environment. In fact, research shows that this approach seldom impacts workforce diversity and does nothing to promote inclusion or belonging. The heart of this challenge is finding ways to embrace and leverage the various perspectives that people of diverse identities bring to the workplace.

Changing organisational culture involves introducing new behaviours and extinguishing old patterns. Research has shown that individuals from diverse minority groups are often excluded from internal networks of information and opportunity in organisations (Pettigrew & Martin, 1987). To overcome these social factors, organisations must actively work to change their workplace cultures. For example, over half of the Best Workplaces™ have a dedicated senior leadership role that focuses on diversity and inclusion in the workplace. Many have also introduced training to help senior leaders, managers and HR staff address unconscious biases that may impact hiring decisions, performance management, work assignments and promotion.

Many companies may seek to improve diversity by hiring people with different backgrounds, but this can have negative consequences if others in the organisation are not prepared to operate in an inclusive manner. In Asia, this can be particularly challenging when it comes to gender diversity, as many national and workplace

cultures have traditionally been male dominated. Making a shift towards the inclusion of women will require not only policy changes, but adjustments in day-to-day management and individual behaviour. In the short-term, this can make matters less comfortable for men in a male-dominated workplace culture. This includes making male leaders less certain about their actions as assumptions are challenged and new behaviours are adopted to promote greater inclusiveness.

An anecdote shared by a Japanese senior executive with one of the authors illustrates the challenge and opportunity:

For generations, our executive team was a group of local men who had grown up in our industry in our country. When the new CEO wanted to make changes to our team and bring in new talent, we were all supportive. However, we did not anticipate the change in dynamics of bringing in both a foreigner and a woman to our team of 10 leaders. Suddenly we all needed to speak in English and be more thoughtful in our interactions to be inclusive. It was a hard change, but after more than a year, I could not imagine going back! This simple change caused us to be more thoughtful and really challenge our assumptions about our business and business model. We are now working to create a more diverse workforce throughout the company as we see the benefits all around us.

As organisations become more inclusive, fostering a sense of belonging poses yet another challenge, particularly for those in minority groups. It is clear from our research that when there is a strong feeling of belonging among female employees, there is an increased sense of teamwork and a strong feeling of pride in

the organisation. When inclusion is rated highly, belonging may also be rated highly – but not always. However, when inclusion is rated as low, very few female employees will feel a sense of belonging. This indicates that a positive experience of inclusion may be a precondition for feeling a sense of belonging. A supportive and inclusive work culture strengthens an individual's perception of connectedness and the sense that others care about their well-being.

Creating a workplace that leverages diversity requires leaders to think differently about the culture of the organisation in terms of psychological safety, teamwork, inclusion and belonging. It is often hard for leaders to prioritise this amidst global pressure brought by growth targets, competition, changing regulations, digital transformation and shareholder expectations. In the highly diverse region of Asia however, organisations that can embrace diversity, inclusion and belonging will be better equipped to address the challenges of the future.

Time and perseverance are needed to address the organisational elements necessary to harness the power of diversity. It is best thought of as an ongoing journey rather than a fixed destination. Efforts may initially result in awkward situations and some uncomfortable learnings as individuals, teams and leaders grow in their ability to harness this untapped energy. But those able to develop this capability can expect to see positive results in employee engagement, customer satisfaction and revenue growth. It seems to be the right time to focus on creating a great workplace for all.

FIGURE 13:
KEY ELEMENTS IN CREATING A GREAT PLACE TO WORK FOR ALL
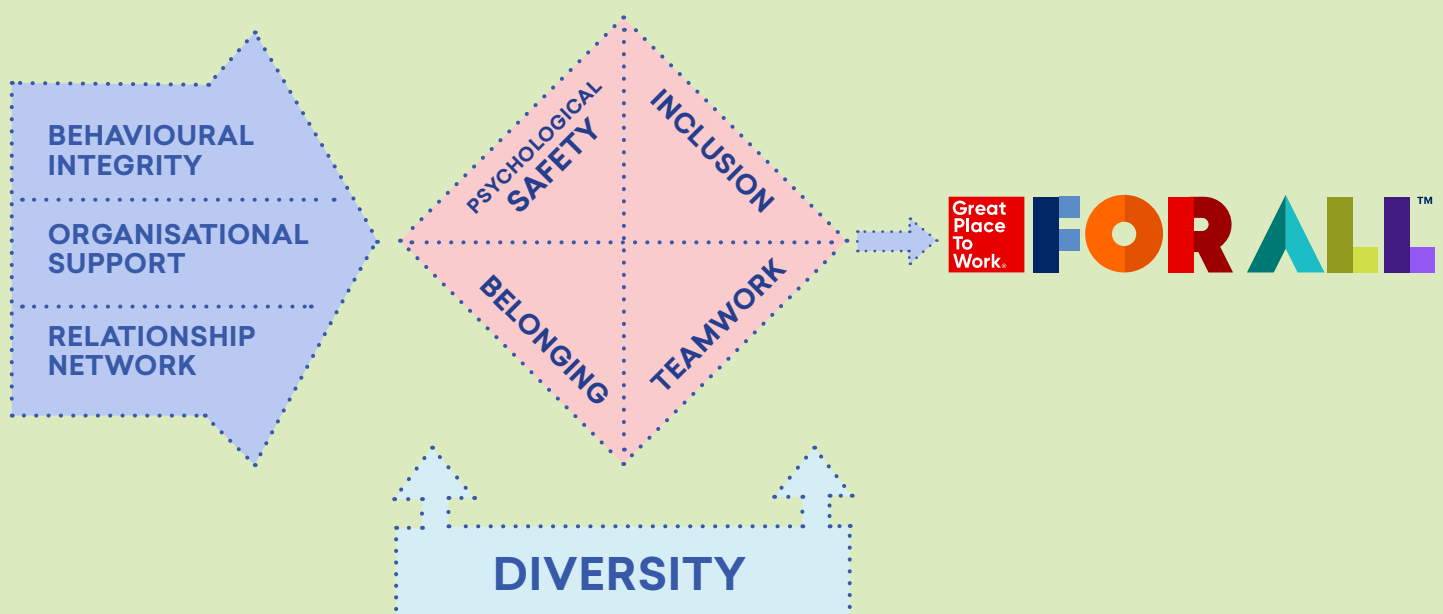
CONCLUSION

The diversity of our Asia region is evident all around us. We have long sought to navigate the complexity of our cultures, languages, socioeconomic development, traditions, demographics and mindsets. While this can create challenges for businesses in our region, it also offers opportunity for those choosing to embrace the differences. Gender diversity is a clear starting point, given current market opportunities and the significantly different experiences of men and women in terms of equity and opportunity at work. This is one of the largest studies in Asia to highlight gender differences and evaluate how psychological safety, inclusion, belonging and teamwork contribute to a work environment that leverages its diversity. We hope this report provides leaders with additional considerations in how to leverage the diversity of our region as an opportunity for global competitive advantage.
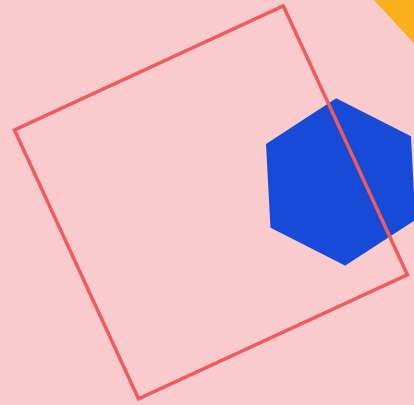
> "...WHEN WE IMPROVE PEOPLE'S FEELING OF BELONGING, THEIR ABILITY TO GROW, AND THEIR SENSE OF SAFETY AND TRUST, ALL OUR HR AND MANAGEMENT DECISIONS WORK BETTER."

JOSH BERSIN

HARNESSING DIVERSITY AND CULTIVATING BELONGING - RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LEADERS

Taking on the challenge of diversity takes time and focus from an organisation's top leaders, with the support of experts who can help guide their efforts. After reviewing our findings across Asia and listening to leaders across countries, we have compiled a suggested roadmap that encompasses the following steps:

1/ ADDRESS PEOPLE DECISIONS

Some of the immediate priorities (where the largest gaps were noted in our study) relate to pay, promotions and recognition. Clear expectations and advancement criteria are necessary, along with a high degree of transparency. A decision to promote an individual may seem logical to senior management but may appear biased to other members of the organisation. Establishing clear guidelines for pay levels, promotion, recognition and even how we hire provides a starting point. Many leading organisations also endeavour to provide additional levels of exposure for employees in other areas of the company. This gives managers, promotion committees and other stakeholders greater exposure to the organisation's diverse talent.

To help leaders at all levels embrace diversity and cultivate belonging, some organisations have mandated goals associated with building a more open and diverse workforce. This may involve analysing additional metrics, as well as training managers to recognise decision-making biases in their people-decisions. Leading organisations also ask their managers to be aware of how opportunities are distributed within their teams. By asking team members about the opportunities that interest them and tracking their progress in these assignments, managers can become an active ally to their employees.

2/ MAKE DIVERSITY, INCLUSION & BELONGING A MANAGEMENT PRIORITY

3/ CONSIDER INFORMATION AND OPPORTUNITY FLOW

While formal communication may flow equally across most companies (emails from the CEO, etc.), informal networks often carry important context that may exclude some members of the workforce. Leaders who make time to connect with those of diverse backgrounds and perspectives will have a better understanding of the dynamics within those groups. Proactively reaching out to diverse team members—including women—may not only provide good insight for leaders, but also greatly enhance the perception of inclusiveness. Being accessible is not about waiting for people to knock on your door; it is reaching out to learn what is working well and understand where there are gaps.

To actively address inclusion and create a sense of belonging, managers can reach out to share experiences and interests that may be similar to or different from their own. Demonstrating curiosity about families, cultures, hobbies and interests in a work-appropriate way can help break down barriers and increase personal connections. Sharing stories about one's life and work experiences can also be a powerful way to connect. Everyone on your team has a different story to tell and it is important for team members to have opportunities to get to know each other's stories. At Great Place to Work®, we call this being *giftlike* in our interactions.

4/ MAKE PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

By collecting quantitative and qualitative data on your diversity and inclusion initiatives, you can develop baseline measures to help track your progress over time. This can also offer a valuable perspective into your employees' experiences and support your efforts to recognise team and organisational improvements, so you can celebrate successes along the way.

6/ COLLECT DATA TO MEASURE EFFORTS

Changing organisational culture involves changing its individual members' behaviours. It is often easy to start a diversity initiative, but much harder to maintain momentum. Rewarding managers who try new behaviours, undertake to create more inclusive teams and take steps towards a more open work environment reinforces those efforts.

5/ RECOGNISE AND REWARD MANAGER BEHAVIOURS

HILTON

Hilton is committed to developing and retaining women leaders through meaningful career experiences, development programmes, and coaching.

Its 'Women in Leadership' strategy has six primary areas of focus:

i.   The Women's Team Member Resource Group
ii. Women's leadership development programmes, including a signature residential programme for senior women in senior positions. This is delivered through the University of Virginia Darden School of Business and includes a women-focused online curriculum.
iii. The Women's Executive Networking Programme, which provides women at the senior director level and above the opportunity to network directly with Hilton's Executive Committee members
iv. Women's mentoring programmes
v.   Dedicated sessions for women leaders held within the hotel's premises
vi. Participation in external conferences, events, and networking events such as the Black Enterprise Women of Power Summit and Conference Board's Women's Leadership Conference

CISCO

Learning about and utilising each other's differences is a crucial component of the Cisco culture that empowers teams, eliminates biases, and creates an environment where everyone feels welcomed, valued, respected, and heard.

Cisco's hiring managers are at the front line of building our inclusive and diverse organisation. To support them, Cisco has designed an on-line platform called the Diverse Interview Panel, which is an interactive information site where Hiring Managers can find tools, training, and other resources to support diverse hiring practices. By leveraging this platform, Cisco better ensures that it has diversity in both candidate slates and interview panels. One example is the Diversity Interviewer Tool, where women can register to be interviewers by inputting their skill sets and working experience. Hiring Managers then access the tool to identify female interviewers and invite them to participate in interview panels.

UNDERSTANDING DIVERSITY, INCLUSION & BELONGING

TERM	DIVERSITY

Definition

The systematic and planned commitment of an organisation to recruit and retain a heterogeneous mix of employees with the goal of leveraging that diversity to improve organisation performance and results.

Description

Diversity measures the differences in the makeup of your workforce. In the context of an organisation, diversity is most often used to refer to demographic differences such as gender, race/ethnicity, physical abilities, age and nationality. In some organisations, the concept of diversity has expanded to include differences in social/work styles, strengths/abilities, personality types/preferences and ways of thinking and learning.

Diversity is getting invited to the table.

INCLUSION

The degree to which a work environment or culture is open to individuals of all backgrounds—not just members of historically powerful identity groups—so that everyone is fairly treated, valued for who they are and included in core decision making (Roberson, 2006).

Inclusion measures the degree to which the organisational culture is relevant to everyone in the workforce and enables diversity to thrive. It requires a type of culture in which differences are appreciated, decision making is inclusive, and every employee can pursue his or her career aspirations without being inhibited by gender, ethnicity, nationality, religion, or other factors that are irrelevant to performance.

Inclusion is having a voice at the table.

BELONGING

An individual's perception of connectedness and the extent to which they feel that others care about their well-being as an equal part of the group (Shore, et. al., 2011).

Belonging reflects a fundamental human need to form and maintain lasting, positive and significant relationships with others. It measures the extent to which individuals perceive themselves to be a valued part of a team or group. An employee's sense of belonging is influenced by factors such as their perception of being valued for their unique skills and abilities; having a voice in decision making and an ability to effect change; and being appreciated for their contributions.

Belonging is having your voice heard at the table.

TERM

DIVERSITY

Key questions

How diverse is our current workforce in terms of the factors listed above?

What other types of diversity do we want/need and how would that benefit our organisation?

How do we attract and hire that diversity?

How can we measure it?

Managers and senior leaders reflect the demographics of the available talent pool in the market.

New hires reflect the available diversity of talent in the market across all roles.

Employment branding language and materials reflect the diversity of your workforce and show that diverse perspectives are valued.

Recruiters provide with diverse slates of candidates for job openings.

Interviewers/interview panels reflect the diversity you seek.

INCLUSION

Do we have a workplace culture that supports, appreciates and recognises diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives?

Do we have fair policies and performance/ talent management practices that support the retention, development, recognition and promotion of a diverse workforce?

Do we have employees who are able to work effectively with those who bring different perspectives and experiences?

Do we have leaders/managers who value diverse perspectives and understand how to harness them for the benefit of the organisation?

Retention and promotion rates are reflective of key demographics.

Leaders, managers and those involved in hiring are trained in recognising unconscious bias.

Related comments from online workplace reviews

BELONGING

Can I be myself at work and do I feel accepted by my manager and colleagues every day?

Do my manager and colleagues show genuine interest in me as a person, not just an employee?

Am I involved in decisions that affect my work?

Am I encouraged to express my opinions and share my ideas freely— even if they may be different from or contrary to those of others?

Do I feel that my abilities, input and contributions are appreciated and recognised?

Self-reporting via workplace surveys with relevant questions.

Responses to questions asked during one-to-one manager meetings and development discussions.

Qualitative data from exit interviews.

Input from focus groups that include employees who represent the diversity you seek.

TERM

DIVERSITY

**Where do
we start?**

Collect quantitative and qualitative data to review the current level of diversity in your organisation and to track progress over time.

Develop goals for diversity that are integrated with current talent processes and desired business outcomes.

Make your values and intentions clear to all employees.

Train hiring managers, interviewers and HR/talent acquisition partners in recognising unconscious bias.

Set and communicate requirements for diverse slates of candidates to be presented for openings, as well as diverse interview panels

INCLUSION

Establish clear, transparent guidelines for pay levels, promotion and recognition programmes.

Have teams reflect on the diversity that they bring to their work and perspectives that might be overrepresented or missing.

When team members introduce themselves to new hires, have them include information beyond their work roles and responsibilities.

Train managers and leaders in managing a diverse workforce with confidence.

Recognise and reward managers and team members who try new behaviours, make efforts to create more inclusive teams and take active steps to improve the openness of the work environment.

Solicit input from everyone in meetings. Ask for different opinions and perspectives.

BELONGING

Bring together focus groups of employees to identify enablers and inhibitors on issues that may affect their sense of belonging.

Proactively reach out to team members. Ask people how they feel about their job and workplace—and genuinely listen. Do they feel like they can bring their full self to work? When do they most feel part of the team and when do they not?

Share stories about your work and life experience and encourage others to share theirs.

Show appreciation when people offer differing opinions and perspectives.

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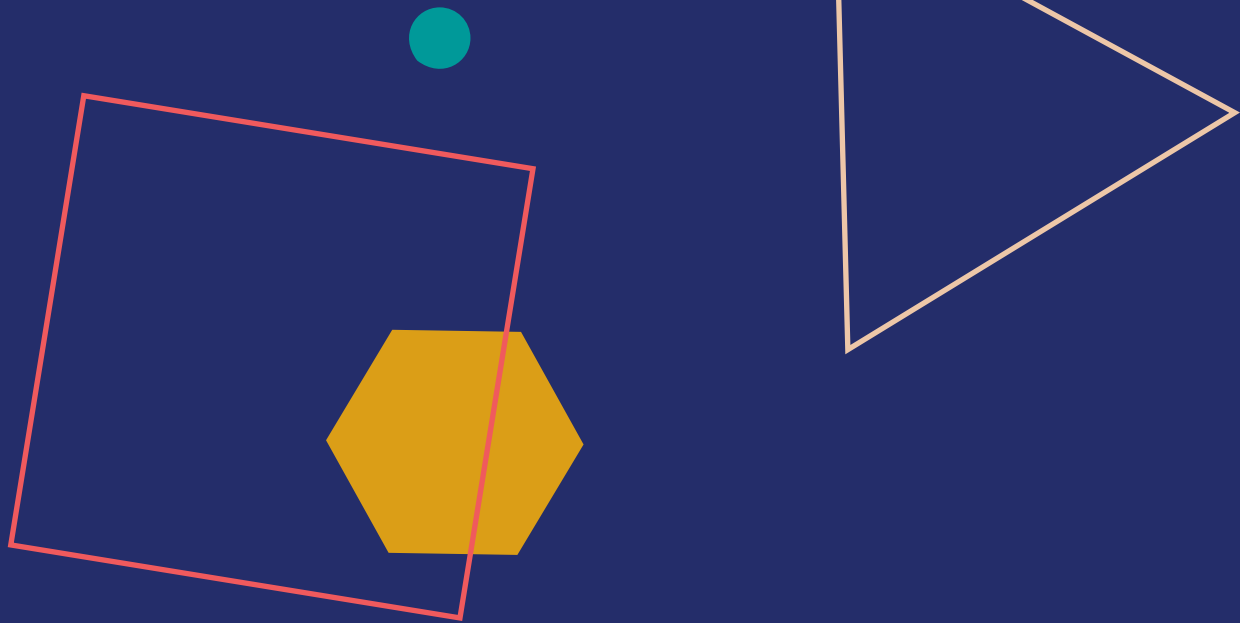
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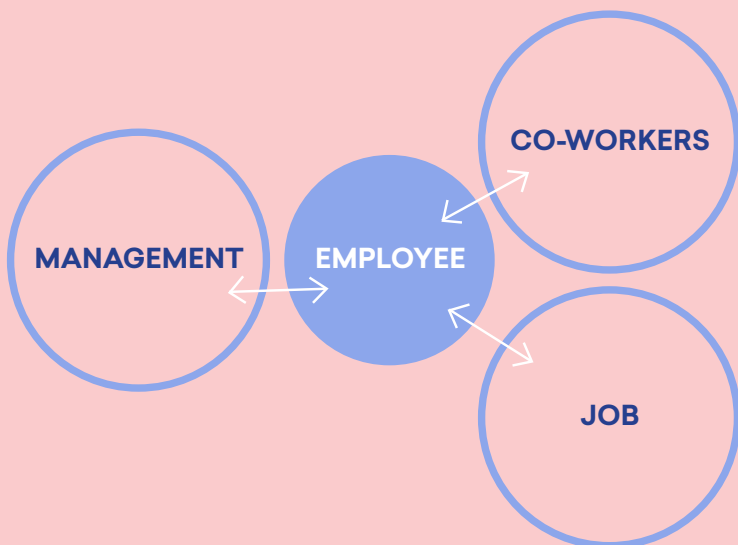
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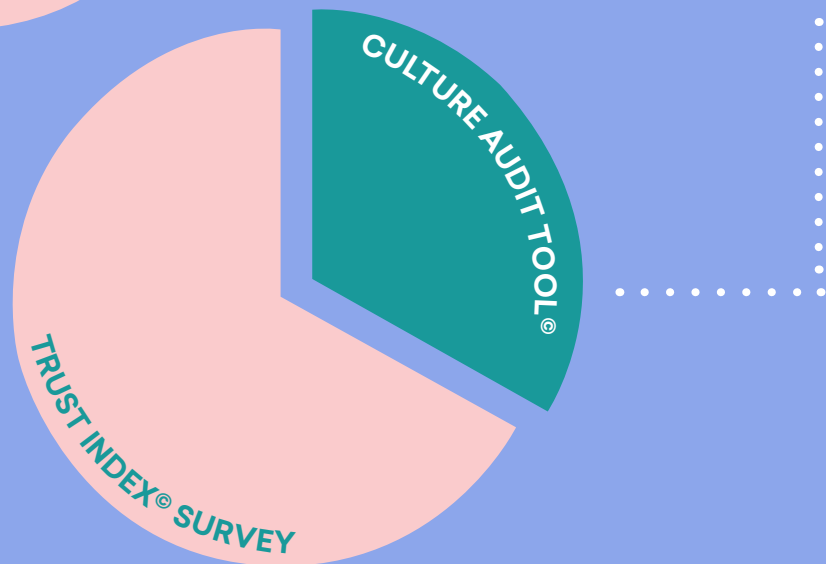
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